

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7174

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK 2999

USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2151

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: APRIL 9 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTING ON LEBANON

1. MORNING DAMASCUS BROADCAST REPORTED ACTIVITY PREVIOUS DAY IN BEIRUT AIMED AT ARRANGING TOMORROW'S MEETING OF PARLIAMENT TO AMEND ARTICLE 73. RADIO CLAIMED INTERNATIONAL CIRCLES CONTINUE TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN INITIATIVE, AND CITED STATEMENT BY PATRIARCH ELIAS IV REJECTING ATTEMPTS TO INTERNATIONALIZE CONFLICT. RADIO HIGHLIGHTED STATEMENT BY PRAVDA IN SUPPORT OF SYRIAN EFFORTS IN LEBANON.

2. AL-BAATH BANNERED: "INTENSIFIED POLITICAL CONTACTS PRECEDE CONVENING OF LEBANESE PARLIAMENT. POLITICAL CIRCLES UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTINUE TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN INITIATIVE."

AL-THAWRAH CAPTIONED ITS ARTICLE: "EXPANSION OF SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN INITIATIVE AND WARNING AGAINST DANGERS OF DIVIDING LEBANON." TISHRIIN HEADLINED: "UNANIMITY ON NECESSITY OF PARLIAMENT MEETING TOMORROW. STRICT SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS PRECEDE MEETING. SYRIAN INITIATIVE ONLY HOPE IN LEBANON." PRESS REPORTED MEETINGS TO ENSURE SECURITY AT MEETING OF PARLIAMENT, INCLUDING ONE IN WHICH "REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL FACTIONS AGREED TO FORM JOINT SECURITY COMMITTEE." PRESS HIGHLIGHTED MEETING OF LEBANESE LEFTISTS UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP JUMBLATT WHICH SUPPORTED NECESSITY TO IMPLEMENT CEASEFIRE AND CONVENE PARLIAMENT. AL-BAATH REPORTED STATEMENT BY GEMAYEL URGING LEBANESE TO ACCEPT IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVIOUSLY NEGOTIATED SYRIAN SETTLEMENT PLAN. SANA RELEASED STATEMENT BY GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCH ELIAS IV TO PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP GROUP SUPPORTING SYRIAN EFFORTS AND REJECTING ATTEMPTS NOW UNDERWAY TO INTERNATIONALIZE CRISIS.

3. TISHRIIN REPORTED THAT AMB. BROWN MET WITH JUMBLATT APRIL 8 AND THAT FOLLOWING MEETING JUMBLATT STATED HE AND BROWN AGREED UPON NECESSITY OF CONVENING PARLIAMENT SATURDAY. ARTICLE ALSO CITED ARRIVAL IN BEIRUT OF FRENCH ENVOY GEORGE GORCE. SANA RELEASE DATED PARIS REPORTED STATEMENT BY FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER LAUDING "IMPORTANT SYRIAN ROLE" IN SEEKING IMPLEMENT CEASEFIRE AND RESTORATION OF PEACE.

4. PRESS CLAIMED THAT AMERICAN MISSILE SHIP --USS HAMAN-- WOULD VISIT HAIFA IN LATE APRIL AND EARLY MAY. ARTICLE NOTED EARLIER STATEMENT FROM DOD ANNOUNCING GROUP OF SHIPS FROM SIXTH FLEET ANCHORED ONE DAY'S DISTANCE FROM LEBANESE COAST "UNDER GUISE OF PREPARING FOR EVACUATION OF AMERICAN NATIONALS WHEN NECESSARY."

5. TISHRIIN SCATHINGLY ATTACKED U.S. POLICY TOWARD RESOLUTION OF LEBANESE CRISIS, CITING WASHINGTON POST "REVELATION" THAT USG "THREATENED ISRAELI MILITARY INTERVENTION IN LEBANON IF SYRIA INTERFERED MILITARILY IN OVERT MANNER IN LEBANON." REFERRING TO SECRETARY'S UNCLASSIFIED

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STATEMENT THAT U.S. WOULD NOT INTERVENE IN LEBANON EVEN IN INSTANCE OF SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION, EDITORIAL CHARGED THAT "U.S. HAS ASSIGNED ISRAEL TASK OF AGGRESSION ON ITS BEHALF IN MIDDLE EAST." WP REVELATION THAT ADMINISTRATION INFORMED PARTIES U.S. PRESSURE COULD NOT PREVENT ISRAELI INTERVENTION ALSO CITED AS EVIDENCE THAT "SECRETARY LENDING SUPPORT TO CAMPAIGN OF ASSAULTS, FALSITIES AND HOSTILITY AGAINST SYRIA LED BY PARTIES TO

SINAI AGREEMENT AND CERTAIN GROUPS AND FACTIONS IN LEBANON." EDITORIAL REITERATED THAT SYRIAN AIM IN LEBANON IS STOPPING BLOODSHED, PROTECTING LEBANESE UNITY AND PREVENTING FURTHER USE OF LEBANESE EVENTS TO DISTRACT ARAB ATTENTION FROM SINAI ACCORD AND PROPOSAL TO END STATE OF BELLIGERENCY. ADDED THAT "THIS IS WHAT U.S. AND ISRAEL DO NOT DESIRE, BECAUSE THEY UNDERSTAND SYRIA'S SUCCESS IN RESOLVING LEBANESE CONFLICT WILL RELEASE SYRIA'S HAND IN BATTLE OF LIBERATING ARAB LANDS AND PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. FOR SAKE OF COVERING UP PLOT OF SINAI AGREEMENT, THEY INFLAMED CONDITIONS IN LEBANON. THEY DID THIS TO DISTRACT SYRIA FROM THE BASIC BATTLE AND DEMANDED ARABIZING AND INTERNATIONALIZING LEBANESE CRISIS SHORTLY BEFORE EXPIRATION OF UNDOF MANDATE ON CONFRONTATION LINES BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL."

6. COMMENT: DIRECT REFERENCE TO JUBLATT MARKS FIRST MENTION OF LEFTIST LEADER BY NAME FOR SOME DAYS. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT JUMBLATT MENTIONED IN POSITIVE CONTEXT OF HIS WILLINGNESS TO IMPLEMENT CEASEFIRE AND HOLD PARLIAMENT SESSION. TISHRIIN EDITORIAL IS MOST BITTER DENUCIATION OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD LEBANON THAT WE HAVE YET READ AND CONTRASTS STRIKINGLY WITH PAUCITY OF COMMENTS ABOUT U.S. DURING SPEECHES COMMEMORATING BAATH PARTY'S 29TH ANNIVERSARY EVENING OF APRIL 7 (SEPTTEL).
MURPHY

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